

Washington, DC - Rep. Linda Sánchez helped secure funding today for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) after tireless efforts to urge members of the Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee to provide increased funding in the fiscal year 2010 CJS Appropriations bill, so that more low-income families and individuals can access legal assistance.

“With our economy in trouble and numerous working families facing foreclosure, more individuals need legal assistance programs for help and advice,” said Rep. Linda Sánchez, member of the House Judiciary Committee. “It is critical that legal assistance programs have adequate funding to provide working families with equal access to justice. I applaud the Subcommittee for understanding the importance of this funding.”

At the request of Rep. Sánchez and several of her colleagues, the CJS Subcommittee will also partially rescind restrictions on how charitable legal providers who receive Legal Services Corporation funds can use the funds they receive from private donors. Such restrictions have severely limited the types of legal assistance private organizations can provide to families in need. Removing restrictions on the use of non-LSC funds will significantly broaden the resource base for programs receiving LSC funds without the need for additional Federal funding.

Programs which receive Legal Services Corporation funding help the most vulnerable, such as families facing unlawful evictions or foreclosures, displaced persons attempting to obtain federal emergency assistance, and women seeking protection from abuse.

Since 2005, several reports have shown the impact of underfunding of legal services programs:

- \* In California, more than 66 percent of the civil legal needs of low-income Californians go unmet.
- \* In Wisconsin, 80 percent of poor households facing a legal problem do so without an attorney.
- \* In Utah, 87 percent of poor households facing a legal problem do so without an attorney.
- \* In New Jersey, 99 percent of defendants in eviction cases are unrepresented by an attorney.